

# STORMY TIMES AHEAD?

THE AFRICA-EU RELATIONS IN THE RUN-UP TO THE 2017 SUMMIT  
AFRICA – EU POLICY DIALOGUE PLATFORM SERIES

9-10 MAY 2017 IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA



**FRIEDRICH  
EBERT**   
**STIFTUNG**



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## **REPORT OF THE AFRICA-EU POLICY DIALOG**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Africa-European Union (EU) policy dialogue entitled “Stormy times ahead? – The Africa-EU relations in the run-up to the 2017 Summit” took place on 9-10 May 2017 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The meeting was held just a few months before the next AU-EU Summit, which is scheduled for November 2017 in Abidjan, Cote D’Ivoire.

The meeting took place in the context of a fast-changing political landscape on both continents. In Europe, the Brexit referendum and election of President Macron in France are bound to redefine the EU. Furthermore, there have been concerns raised as a result of the growing influence of far right-wing politics in the EU, a development that has so far influenced many policies, including those relating to migration, at the expense of development, democracy and human rights.

In Africa, the election of a new Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) along with his Commissioners constitutes an opportunity for the EU to engage with the new AUC in order to ‘build trust’. Perhaps more importantly, the current team is viewed as cooperative and this should provide a positive impetus helping move forward with AU-EU cooperation. The main focus, however, is to be placed on current ongoing AU institutional reforms based on the Kagame report. Finally, the admission of Morocco into the AU is also expected to shake things up a bit in both sides since Morocco is a key political and economic player on the African continent.

All this provided the context within which the Africa-EU policy dialogue took place. The meeting was co-organised by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and Centre for Citizens Participation in the African Union (CCPAU) under Chatham House Rules. The two-day policy dialogue was attended by some 60 participants, including senior officials from the African Union (AU) and the EU as well as EU Member States, representatives of think tanks and CSOs from both continents.

By bringing together selected experts on the Africa-EU partnership, the meeting sought to

analyse the upcoming AU-EU Summit in Abidjan in November 2017, discuss ways forward, and help consolidate cooperation between Africa and Europe. The overall aim of the conference was therefore to holistically address key areas of common concern and interest in the Africa-EU partnership that could contribute to the agenda-setting for the Africa-EU Summit to be held in November 2017. Specific objectives of the conference included:

1. To make an assessment of the rapid changes taking place in the global landscape and implications for the EU-Africa partnership;
2. To facilitate a reciprocal political dialogue and foster a deeper understanding of EU and African perspectives on some of the key issues of strategic interest in the partnership;
3. To contribute to bridging the gap between diverging approaches in key areas of the EU-Africa partnership;
4. To identify possible priority themes for the 2017 Africa-EU Summit bearing in mind the principles of inclusivity and equality.

## **B. THE EU-AFRICA PARTNERSHIP AT A CRITICAL JUNCTURE**

### **1. A political partnership still largely absent**

Since its inception in 2007, the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) has faced the challenge of not developing enough political traction. Too many issues are still being discussed on a rather technical level between working-level staff and not regularly between political decision-makers. One participant further remarked that one major challenge is the fact that, even after ten years, the partnership still lacks a political vision. According to the participant, it would be of key importance to develop political guidance for the overall relationship before moving on to thematic areas in order to steer their implementation. Indeed, between 2014-17, there have been ministerial assessment meetings in the thematic work areas, but not a single meeting to discuss the partnership itself.

Hence, it is time for both partners to ask themselves what JAES is there for and what they want to achieve with it. If this is not done, the participant said, we will risk talking about the same things in three years. In order to utilise the full potential of the partnership and address contentious issues such as migration, the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA), the International Criminal Court, good governance etc. as well as issues arising due to a rapidly changing global environment, it is important to provide more space for political debates that goes beyond the interactions of bureaucrats. It is therefore encouraging that the EU in its Joint Communication for a renewed impetus of the Africa-EU partnership from 4 May is advocating a stronger political relationship that should become more strategic.

One of the areas in which the EU is proposing to foster more political engagement is global governance. Identifying common interests in the global arena is certainly a promising approach to building stronger political links, but this was already addressed during the EU-Africa summit

in 2014 and did not materialise. In this context, a participant further cautioned that even if there was a positive spirit surrounding the EU-Africa summit in 2014, and the promise of more political engagement was in the air, the partnership has continued to encounter difficulties within the deteriorating global context in which it is embedded. The question was asked on how Trump, the Brexit, the issue of migration and rising populism in Europe will impact the relationship and how, or if, the two partners are willing and able to address some of these issues adequately in November.

### **2. An interest-based partnership**

The partnership is still characterised by a donor-recipient logic. While it is problematic that many AU member states are still not making their contributions to the AU, thereby forcing the AU to depend on foreign donors, it is equally problematic how the EU is creating divisions between its African partners because it is often financing its own interests.

In this regard, one participant lamented the continued donorization of the partnership and that the EU is financing its partners wherever it sees fit. The practice so far has been like this: If the continental level is not working, the EU moves on to the sub-regional level and – if this does not work – it cooperates at the national or bilateral level. This, according to the participant, could be most aptly seen in how the EU is handling the migration issue. African interests and approaches including the international development plans are often sidelined while European interests continue to dominate. This approach, according to the participant, is dividing Africa on the basis of the states or institutions willing to follow the European approach, which are therefore funded, and those who do not, which are therefore not funded, with the result being that overall development of the continent is compromised.

One participant suggested that the European partner needs to acknowledge, respect and support African interests in order to evolve a more mutual and hence stronger partnership. Another problem closely linked to this is that so far the security agenda trumps everything else and does not provide enough opportunities for respective development agendas.

A good example of how Africa is approached by international donors and partners is the G 20 initiative – Compacts with Africa (CwA)<sup>1</sup> – which is supposed to help African states promote their private and infrastructural investments. However, not all African countries will be able or willing to participate in this initiative, as the willingness and the approach to reform their countries and make it more investor-friendly will be vetted by the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

If the respective national development plan does not fit the criteria of the CwA, it will not be accepted. Consequently, the CwA have largely been developed without African stakeholders' input and do not address some of the most fundamental challenges Africa is facing. Hence, neither social and ecological risks which could arise from the envisaged investments, nor any investments in education, which is a necessary addition to investments in infrastructure and in the private sector, are mentioned. It was therefore stressed by participants that Africa needs to continue to push its own agenda and see where international donors and partners would fit in, and not the other way around. In this context, it was furthermore remarked that Africa needs to decode the current bilingualism of donors and find out what their promises really mean and if they can rely on them in the future.

### **3. Continued instability on the continent**

#### **Reform of APSA?**

It was generally agreed upon that peace and security has been one of the most successful and active areas in the last ten years in the Africa-EU partnership. The EU has provided a majority of the funding for the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and its establishment. One participant stressed that capacity-building was

important in order to give the AU and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) the capacity to deal with conflicts. Even though there are still many challenges, this support was

important for the AU to have been able to expand its position on the continent in terms of addressing peace and security issues.

However, it was mentioned by a participant that in recent times new challenges have arisen for the APSA. First, there has been a significant change in the nature of conflicts on the continent. While the African Standby Force (ASF) was conceptualized to tackle interstate conflicts and military confrontations, there are new threats today which are characterised by violent extremism, radicalisation, piracy and transnational organised crime. The question was raised whether the APSA is still the right tool with which to tackle these challenges.

In order to respond to these conflicts, the AU has supported the proliferation of new institutional frameworks such as the Sahel G 5, Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) as interim innovative solutions prior to the deployment of the ASF. However, the ASF has never been deployed to tackle any of the conflicts Africa is currently grappling with. The deployment of the ASF, which is composed of five regional brigades provided by the RECs, has been hampered so far by a lack of resources, capacities, different degrees of integration and already existing (or non-existing) security structures within the RECs as well as political will.

Furthermore, the proliferation of these new institutions has raised the question of whether or not they are part of APSA. One participant remarked that they are automatically part of the APSA, as it is the PSC which decides on issues that affect peace and security in Africa. Hence, the APSA does not need to be revised. The only thing that is needed, according to the participant, was an update of the PSC Protocol in order to take into account the APSA framework and the changing nature of conflict on the continent. However, so far the Sahel G 5 and the LCBC have not officially been considered to be part of the APSA and they also lack funding.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the Compacts with Africa see: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/13441.pdf>

## **Sustainable Funding**

The proliferation of institutional frameworks, as one of the participants called it, also raised the issue of funding. It became quite clear in the discussion that the EU is interested in extending support for these new institutional frameworks, which also means more support for the RECs. Hence, it is not clear whether the AU can count on the continued funding support it has received from the EU so far. The EU has already reduced its support for the APSA by 20%, which poses a challenge for the AU and ongoing peace operations such as AMISOM. In this context, participants stressed that there is need for sustainable sources of financing for peace and security in Africa and that Africa also needs to do more. One notable development in this regard is the establishment of the AU Peace Fund that is supposed to fund at least 25% of the cost of peace operations.

The man behind these efforts is Donald Kaberuka, who has proposed in his report on Securing Predictable and Sustainable Financing for Peace in Africa that Africa should impose a 0.2% import levy or tariffs on specific imports in order to generate sustainable revenue with which to fund AU activities. Participants agreed that if Africa wants to become independent of foreign influence in peace and security issues it has to contribute more and should soon operationalise the fund. However, it was noted that there is a potential source of funding for peace and security issues on the continent. Several participants strongly advocated more cooperation between Africa and Europe in curbing illicit financial flows (IFF) from Africa. According to estimates, Africa loses about 60 billion dollars annually, which is more than what the EU provides. While a fair amount of IFFs end up in European banks, one participant asked who was actually funding whom.

## **Political dialogue and coordination above and beyond capacity- building and financing**

In order to adequately address security challenges and conflicts in Africa, participants stressed that a political approach was required which goes above and beyond financing.

Such a political dialogue needs to be underpinned by an approach that tackles the root causes of conflict. In addition to this, participants stressed that such a dialogue and approach will need to involve local communities, as these are the people who are fighting and suffering. This would also have to include civil society organisations (CSO), as there cannot be a military solution to these challenges. In order to guarantee sustainable security, such a political dialogue also needs to address issues like good governance as well as an economic perspective, especially for the young African population who are increasingly falling prey to violent extremism.

While the EU should give African interests more space, addressing IFFs and discussing economic development with the African partner instead of offering external ready-made solutions, Africa also needs to tackle its severe governance issues, which are also a reason for conflict and migration. Lastly, a participant remarked that it was important to differentiate when talking about causes of conflict, as there are often external reasons for so-called African problems. Hence, one should do away with African solutions for African problems, as these are – more often than not – global problems. As conflicts in Africa are different in nature, only a frank dialogue which discusses a conflict from all angles could identify tailor-made approaches to resolving conflict. Anything else is just a treatment of symptoms.

## **3. Migration**

The increasing number of migrants arriving in Europe in 2015 has led to new dynamics in the African-European partnership. However, the influx of migrants has changed the nature of how the EU is approaching migration and Africa. Even though, as one participant stressed, only some 14 % of the new arrivals in Europe are Africans, the EU quickly shifted its focus to Africa and held a series of summits and meetings on migration. More importantly, though, the EU has made a substantial shift in migration policy, declaring it to be a major priority. Migration is no longer regarded as merely part of development cooperation, but is now at its core in terms of what future development cooperation is to be oriented towards.

Since the EU summit on migration held in Valletta in November 2015, the EU has introduced the EU Trust Fund, the New Partnership Framework for Migration and is in the final stages of operationalising the European external investment plan, which should help create jobs in Africa. The EU's new approach to migration was generally criticised, as it was predominantly conceived to prevent migration. In order to get quick results, the EU is dealing with African countries on a bilateral level, offering them money if they are willing to implement projects set out in the Valletta action plan. This approach provoked several issues in the discussion:

- One participant argued that the EU had forgotten its value agenda preserving human rights and good governance when it comes to migration, as it is also giving money to autocracies and dictatorships. It was further argued that the EU, for the sake of quick fixes, does not factor in the negative side-effects of this, as this money as well as the technical support these regimes are getting could easily be used against minority groups or the opposition. It was questionable whether this approach would stabilize these countries in the long term or could eventually lead to more migration.
- Securing borders and dealing with migration predominantly on a bilateral level risks undermining regional integration efforts and continental projects supported by the EU such as the CFTA, which is closely linked to migration and the free movement of people, respectively. It could also lead to creation of more problems, including trafficking of persons and social fragmentation.
- The current EU approach will further divide Africa, as it has become very difficult for the AU to craft a common African position on migration because some of its member states are eager to get EU funding and abandon African positions. Secondly, in order to implement its agenda, the EU is only interested in the Rabat and Khartoum

processes, which means that approximately one-third of the AU member states are left out, anyway. These points raised the question of who the AU was representing in Africa. One participant remarked that the AU is making policies based on its own institutional logic that often do not represent the interests of its member states. If this was the case, another participant asked, why is the EU then supporting the AU and continental projects like the CFTA?

- Several participants expressed their concern about the securitisation of migration issues, as this has already had an effect on African member states. While migration has been perceived to be something normal for a very long time, many African states due to the generally negative framing of migration in Europe are now seeing it as a threat to national security, too. This will make it even harder to reach migration-related agreements among African states and – eventually – between Africa and Europe.
- In order to address the root causes of migration more political dialogue would be essential. This, one participant said, would have to include local communities, too, because this is where decisions to migrate are taken. However, this seems to be impossible with the continued securitisation of migration currently underway and the EU supporting, among other things, countries and rulers who have no desire to talk to CSOs and their people.

One participant summed things up by describing the migration crisis as a policy-making crisis of the EU and fearing that the toxic view on migration could dominate the upcoming Summit.

#### **4. Continued lack of CSO involvement and youth**

The lack of participation by African CSOs and youth was raised on several occasions. More calls were made to involve African CSOs and youth in the Abidjan Summit since the Africa-EU partnership should be driven by the people. In this regard, CSOs and youths should be more informed in order to participate meaningfully in the partnership. The Joint Annual Forum(JAF) would have been a good opportunity for such an engagement, but it never took place, as the partners could not agree on the participation of CSOs in the process. It was noted that CSO participation would be necessary in order to ensure that the citizens who should be the real owners of the Africa-EU partnership can drive the process and not only governments. There were calls for greater information-sharing in order to empower CSOs to participate effectively. In this context, it was criticised that the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) of the AU attracts too much attention, as they do not properly represent African CSOs.

It was generally agreed that in order to achieve demographic dividends in Africa, youth needs to be provided productive opportunities and have their entrepreneurship harnessed. Otherwise, the issue of youth unemployment in Africa was a ticking time-bomb. Youth will also feel the greatest impact of initiatives under the Africa-EU partnership. In this regard, a participant further stressed that youth want the two partners to address important topical issues in order to improve their lives and secure their future in Africa. This pertained to topics like climate change, social justice, socio-economic development, the free movement of people as well as good governance. According to the participant, the main reasons for migration as well as radicalisation of young people was injustice, a topic that desperately needs to be addressed. Youth are supposed to be the beneficiaries of the partnership, but at the same time are the ones least empowered to create the change they want to see on the continent. Leaders in Africa continue to treat youths as leaders of tomorrow and not today and are only focusing on them out of fear that they will remove them from power.

A participant observed that young people are becoming more and more engaged in political issues and are demanding political change by different means, however. While young people are generally frustrated with the current state of political affairs in many African countries, they are increasingly opting out of the mainstream political sphere and choosing instead to communicate their displeasure with the state of affairs through alternative political areas, including street protests and participation in radical groups. As a result, there are not only more activists advocating political change, but also an increasing number of groups with more radical ideas on how to bring about change. This is increasingly changing the landscape of CSOs in favour of them. Given the current focus on youth issues and young people, it was asked how one should deal with them and whether they should be engaged as well.

The policy dialogue also focused on radicalisation of youth. It was noted that many young persons have internalised the notion that they are marginalised. Thus, they achieve heroic status in extreme groups. The failure to achieve youth integration on the continent is the reason they are finding alternative opportunities for political participation, including resorting to extremism, as was the case in North Africa. In this context, it was further noted that we need to look at the wider context of challenges youth is facing in Africa. These challenges are often consequences of geopolitics and globalisation, which are having a devastating impact on local communities in Africa. Hence, more research and analysis needs to be invested in this area in order to understand the interdependencies of conflicts emanating from the local level. As one participant noted, sometimes the roots are good, but the soil is bad. Regarding the identity of youth, it was suggested that youth should not be viewed as a matter of age, but rather ideology because there are young people with old ideas and old people with young ideas. Another participant pointed out that there seemed to be a culture of suspicion between youth and the old. It was noted that youth is not a permanent state. Therefore, change can only be realised if the young speak to the old. However, it was clarified that the fight being waged by youth is against the system that marginalises young people, and that the old are now part of the system. The struggle, therefore, involves radically changing institutions.

## 5. Regional Integration/EPAs

Even if the EPAs have been discussed for more than a decade, there is still a lot of resistance coming from the African partners against signing them. Most states, CSOs and private-sector representatives in Africa are reluctant or opposed to the EPAs for various reasons which came out in the discussion.

First, the timeframe within which signatories to the EPAs are expected to open up their markets and reduce their tariffs is too short. Secondly, there were fears that local and nascent industries would be exposed to unequal competition from European industries which are more competitive. Thirdly, there are concerns that the government will forfeit its revenues, which are needed for local investments, including infrastructure development. In this context, the fact that governments will not be able to impose tariffs anymore is seen as a curtailment of policy options. Fourthly, the EPAs do not recognise the different levels of development within the RECs or among its member states, respectively.

Finally, EPAs are bad for regional integration insofar as it requires the removal of tariffs, which many countries rely on to fund regional bodies and develop the region. One participant furthermore remarked that even though the EU is advocating regional integration, the EPAs and pressure from the EU to sign them is in fact undermining regional integration.

While non-LDCs (least developed countries) countries like Kenya, Ghana or Cote d'Ivoire are eager to sign EPAs in order to keep free-market access to Europe, others, because they are already LDCs, do not see any reason for such, as they have preferential access to the European market, anyway.

This has created frictions between the member states of the respective RECs – in this case within the East African Community and the Economic Community of West African States. Afraid that they would lose their access to the European market, countries like Kenya and the Cote d'Ivoire have already signed an interim EPA, which is rejected by the rest of their economic bloc.

However, it was also pointed out that the EPAs have done a lot to support regional integration, as it has facilitated policy dialogue on trade and related issues in the regions. In addition, the EPAs are not only an instrument for market access, but also with which to discuss and put joint institutions in place as well as common standards for all participating countries. One participant stressed that EPAs were strange animals at first, but need strategic thinking in order to see the long-term benefits. Hence, the EPAs are not just about trade with the EU, but also about trade and further integration among the members of an REC. The EU's position therefore is that EPAs are mutually supportive of integration because provisions have been drafted in a manner that do not encroach on custom unions at the regional level.

Some participants saw the need to align the EPAs with Agenda 2063, as this framework was preferred because it is a product of a bottom-up process to put in place a coherent and consistent framework and includes contributions from all actors including the public and private sector as well as CSOs. Through Agenda 2063, Africa already had a clear vision and certain aspirations based on 39 areas. Agenda 2063 among other things recognises that trade is essential for economic development and poverty eradication.

The policy dialogue also discussed alternatives to EPAs. These included partial scope agreements to allow pursuit of realistic trade agreement taking into account the level of each country's development. A menu approach was also suggested in a similar vein. Another alternative was to develop country-specific EPAs in order to allow countries to opt out or conclude EPAs on its own terms.

Some participants defended EPAs by noting that some unilateral deals like AGOA can be stopped tomorrow and are therefore not sustainable. There were concerns about the time factor in using alternative frameworks that would require membership in human rights and labour standard institutions. The EPAs therefore offer the only agreement that could provide long-term access to the EU market and at the same time offer flexible rules on rules of origin.

The experience of Canada was relied upon to show the relative benefits EPAs produce despite Brexit. Specifically, Canada had opted to continue with EPAs because of the size of EU's market and the type of goods they were offering. It was further emphasised that an EU after Brexit will still be the largest market in the world and therefore the impact of Brexit will not be catastrophic. All in all, it was noted that all other alternatives should be WTO-compliant. Finally, it was suggested that EPAs have to be renegotiated in a way so that the interests of both sides are met. It remains to be seen if this is possible, though, as this would require a new mandate from the EU Member States which would have legal and political implications.

## **C. Conclusions and policy recommendations for the summit**

The following policy recommendations were forwarded by various participants during the meeting.

### **1. The future of the partnership**

- **Broader political dialogue**

The College to College meetings between the AU and the EU are already a good opportunity to discuss pertinent issues for the partnership. However, it is questionable if these annual meetings are enough to build a solid political partnership that can address contentious issues as well as challenges arising from a rapidly changing global environment.

Hence, it is important to engage the member states more and factor in their interests, as they are ultimately taking the decisions. In addition, the partnership needs to be underpinned by an overall political vision that guides it and the respective thematic approaches. Africa and Europe need to discuss the world they would like to live in, the way they want to shape it together and the priorities they want to focus on. This requires both sides to have a frank political dialogue that does not leave it all up to the bureaucrats.

- **What is the right path for an interest-based partnership?**

Approaches that solely favour the interests of one side will not work. Hence, initiatives need to be developed by Africa and Europe together based on a common understanding and interests. External actors have to acknowledge African interests and approaches and should factor them in instead of looking for support for ready-made frameworks. A promising sign in this regard is the European Commission's joint communication to the European Parliament and the Council for a renewed impetus in the Africa-EU partnership and the collaborative platform it offers to establish with its African partners. However, if the partners agree on this platform, a lot will depend on how it is operationalised, what its mandate will be and how often it meets.

### **2. Towards peace and security**

- **The way forward for APSA**

The nature of conflicts is changing in Africa and raises the questions of whether the APSA is up to the task of addressing the new threats. As the ASF have never been used for this, it raises the question about their usefulness. Hence, the EU as the main funder of APSA needs to engage in a discussion with the AU and its member states about the future role of the APSA and whether it is still the right tool to address today's conflicts. In this context, the partners also have to discuss new ad-hoc security initiatives such as the G-5 Sahel and what these mean for the future of the APSA/ASF. The AU should think about a review of the PSC Protocol in order to make it more responsive to the changing nature of conflict on the continent.

- **Become more independent – on financing**

Closely linked to the question of whether the APSA is still the right tool to tackle the new threats is the question of funding for peace and security in Africa. As the EU has already cut funding and at the same time indicated that it is interested in further financing new conflict mechanisms such as the G5 and MNTJF, both

partners need to engage in a dialogue and come up with a clear understanding for and with regard to what the EU is willing to fund for peace and security in Africa.

The EU should further support the AU and its member states in their efforts to operationalise the AU Peace Fund. Furthermore, in order for Africa to be financially independent, the EU should be assisting Africa in curbing illegal financial flows from the continent and shut down tax havens.

### **3. Migration**

- **Address migration differently**

The way migration is addressed by the partners at the moment is only short-term and makes new frictions highly likely. Therefore, the root causes of migration need to be politically addressed by the partners. The current securitisation of migration will not prevent people from migrating, hence it is only treating symptoms. Although difficult, European leaders need to find ways to discuss and open up legal channels of migration and should use this as a tool to help Africa to develop. In order for such a dialogue to succeed, the narrative on migration has to become more positive and needs to be underpinned by facts, not emotions.

- **Include all African countries in the discussions**

The EU should refrain from predominantly focusing on bilateral agreements based on its own interests. Instead, bilateral or sub-regional discussions between African and European stakeholders should be based on intercontinental frameworks and should reinforce each other. Furthermore, the EU should discuss migration with all African countries. Otherwise, there is a high risk of further fragmenting Africa for the sake of preventing migration. At the same time, this would put the support for the AU in question and undermine projects like the CFTA and the protocol for the free movement of people, which are supposed to help Africa to develop and further integrate.

- **Cost-benefit analysis**

Migration should be looked upon more pragmatically. It was argued that the cost of short-term measures preventing migration should be weighed against the medium- and long-term costs and benefits of migration. Hence, a discussion on the pros and cons would be a good way to chart a course forward and to find out what costs may arise.

### **4. Trade and economic development**

- **Post-Cotonou process**

As trade issues will most likely continue to be addressed under the post-Cotonou framework, participants suggested that Africa should push for elements that would be acceptable for it. In particular, Africa should push for the inclusion of environmental and climate issues in the relationship since they are at a high risk with regard to climate change's adverse impacts.

- **EPA – All's well that ends well?**

In the context of EPAs, it was argued that these need to be renegotiated in order to meet the interests and needs of African partners. In particular, protection of nascent industries and prevention of any adverse effects on further regional integration efforts should be ensured. The possibility of renegotiating them was suggested by Chancellor Merkel in June 2017, when she said that some of the trade agreements between the EU and Africa were not right and needed to be renegotiated. This, she said, would be happening at the Africa-EU summit in Abidjan.

### **5. A reoccurring theme – the lack of involvement of CSOs**

- **Create space for CSO involvement**

As the partnership is supposed to be a people-driven process and is supposed to benefit the people in Africa and Europe, there has to be a CSO presence in the deliberations.

In the discussion, it was suggested that CSOs – members and non-members of the ECOSOCC – should be more informed about progress and activities within the partnership in order to participate meaningfully. As it seems unlikely that the JAF will happen at all, the two partners should therefore discuss and outline other formats in which CSOs could contribute to the partnership. A good starting point is the proposals in the joint communication put forward by the EU. Lastly, the participants welcomed the idea of a new financial envelope to facilitate CSOs' participation in the Africa-EU partnership.

## AGENDA

**DAY 1: Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> May**

**Venue: Sheraton Hotel, Simien Room**

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|---------------|--|
| 9.00 – 9.30   | Registration & Coffee  |
| 9.30 – 9.45   | Welcome and Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. Achieng Maureen Akena, Executive Director, CCPAU</li><li>• Mr. Florian Koch, Director, AU Cooperation, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung</li></ul>                                      |
| 9.45 – 10.30  | Keynote speech <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• H. E. Dr. Anthony Mothae Maruping, Commissioner for Economic Affairs, AU Commission</li></ul>   |
| 10.30 – 12.00 | Session I: Peace and Security – time to deliver?   |
| Chair:        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. Gilles Yabi, Director, Think Tank Citoyen de l'Afrique de l'Ouest</li></ul>  |
| Input:        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. Admore Kambudzi, Ag. Director, Peace and Security Department, AU Commission</li><li>• Dr. Thorsten Clausing, First Counsellor, Head, Peace and Security Section, EU Delegation to the AU</li></ul> |
| Comment:      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prof. Siphamandla Zondi, Head, Department of Political Science, University of Pretoria</li></ul>   |

### Background:

Peace and Security has always been a topic high up on the Africa-EU agenda. The EU has long supported African efforts to foster Peace and Security on the continent – namely the APSA and peace support operations through the African Peace Facility. In fact, the AU has made great strides in regards to diplomatic efforts in the context of crisis prevention and conflict resolution. However, it seems that these efforts have yet to translate into more tangible results as could be seen by the AU's engagement in the conflicts in Burundi or South Sudan. In the absence of a reliable system of collective security and against the background of a complex political economy of conflicts on the African continent, both diplomatic and preventative initiatives from the AU seem to have fallen short in many cases. At the same time, institutional and technical support for the respective conflict prevention capacities and peace support operations can at the best address symptoms, but can't solve protracted and complex conflicts politically. Donors, who have for a long time favored a technical approach to conflict resolution, are now questioning this form of cooperation and increasingly demand the Africans to "deliver" and show results in terms of peace and stability. A prominent example of donors becoming more impatient is the 20 % cutback for AMISOM by the EU at the beginning of 2016.

### Guiding Questions:

1. How can peace processes on the African continent gain more real commitment?
2. What is needed in order to make political processes result-based instead of institution-focused?
3. Against the eminent shift of donor funding towards the AU, especially in the area of peace & security, what are the implications for the institutional landscape of diplomatic and military approaches?
4. What role is in that for the EU and other international donors?

12.00 – 13.30      Lunch

13.30 – 15.00      Session II: Migration– what are the prospects for a continental approach?

Chair:              • Ms. Dinah Musindarwezo, Executive Director, African Women's Development and Communication Network

Input:              • Mr. Christian Clages, Head, Policy Department for African and the AU, Federal Foreign Office  
                         • Prof. Loren B Landau, Senior Lecturer, University Witwatersrand  
                         • Mr. Ibrahima Kane, Resident Representative, Open Society

Comment:          • Ms. Catherine Woollard, Secretary General, European Council on Refugees and Exiles

### Background:

The EU continues to struggle with forced and irregular migrants who began arriving in 2015, resulting in varied, and sometimes contradictory strategies in EU Member State responses. The sudden surge in migrants overwhelmed the existing systems in EU member states. Although less 20% of migrants to Europe came from Africa, the EU has shifted its focus towards Africa. In recognition of the intersections of migration challenges, this issue has long been a focus of dialogue and action between Africa and Europe, and was addressed by the Migration, Mobility and Employment Dialog (MME), which is now the Migration and Mobility Dialog (MMD), the Rabat and Khartoum processes. However, the unprecedented flow of refugees and migrants into Europe in 2015, has made migration the centerpiece of the EU's foreign policy engagements. This holds especially true for the relation with the African continent. The EU's new approach of no longer looking at migration through the lens of development cooperation, but at development cooperation through the lens of migration has already caused political disagreements between Africa and Europe. In addition to this, the EU, through the "New Partnership Migration Framework", introduced conditionality into the partnership something the African partner had successfully opposed during the Valletta summit in 2015. The new approach also contained the so called compacts, tailor-made agreements with five African countries (Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Ethiopia and Niger) that are supposed to broaden the existing cooperation by not only addressing migration but also related challenges. The compacts have been negotiated since mid-2016 but none of the five African countries has shown any willingness to sign them. It has become clear that the African partner disapproves of the new European approach trying to stop migration towards Europe on the African continent already while Europe is not willing to talk about legal channels of migration. In addition to this, the EU seems to predominantly focusing on North-, East- and West Africa, which are addressed by the Rabat and the Khartoum processes while it ignores the continental approach – the MMD. The Valletta summit and its subsequent process (new migration partnership framework, compacts etc.) have further increased commitment to these processes while the MMD remains to be dormant.

### Guiding Questions:

1. Has the Valletta summit of 2015 and its subsequent process yielded any results so far? If so, what are they?
2. How has the proliferation of dialog processes (MMD, Rabat, Khartoum processes, Valletta) impacted on the partnership on migration and its efficiency? What dialog processes are used at the moment?
3. Since they are (sub-) regional approaches, how can the Khartoum and Rabat processes be integrated in the agenda of the next EU-Africa summit?
4. Have other areas of mutual co-operation between Africa and the EU been subsumed by the focus on migration?

15.00 – 15.30      Tea/Coffee break

15.30 – 17.00      Session III: Africa-EU relations – what has been achieved since 2014?

Chair:              • Mr. Geert Laporte, Deputy Director, European Centre for Development Policy Management

Input:             • H. E. Ranieri Sabatucci, Ambassador, EU Delegation to the AU  
                      • Prof. Adebayo Olukoshi, Director, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

Comment:        • Ms. Hannah Forster, Executive Director, African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies  
                      • Ms. Carolina Quina, Independent Consultant

### Background:

The 4th EU-Africa Summit took place in a positive atmosphere. In contrast to previous summits, both partners chose a rather pragmatic stance contrary to the donor-recipient logic that has dominated the partnership for years. The main outcome of that summit was the Roadmap 2014-2017 that was supposed to guide the partnership for the three-year period and bring enhanced political dialogue between all the stakeholders of the partnership.

This session will take stock of the progress which has been made in the partnership since the summit in terms of concrete implementation of important issues and political dialogue between the two partners. This should also include the identification of areas where more emphasis should be put.

### **Guiding Questions:**

1. Did the partners use the momentum of the last summit to address pertinent issues? If so, where and how?
2. What were the biggest challenges for the partnership between 2014-17 and how could they be addressed in the future?
3. Being a people-centered partnership, has civil society been sufficiently involved in the engagements after the summit? If not, why and what needs to be done?

19.00 – 21.30 Official Dinner

### **DAY 2: WEDNESDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> MAY**

**Venue: Sheraton Hotel, Simien Room**

09.00 – 10.30 Session IV: Between the EPA's, Post-Cotonou and a hard place – the economic relations between Africa and Europe

CHAIR: • Dr. Alex Vines, Africa Director, Chatham House

INPUT: • Mr. Segun Ajayi-Kadir, Director General, Manufacturers Association of Nigeria  
• Mr. Alessandro Tonoli, Trade advisor, European Union Delegation to Kenya, European External Action Service  
• H. E. Nathan Irumba, Head, Southern and Eastern African Trade, Information and Negotiations Institute

### **Background:**

The economic relations between Africa and the EU are facing severe challenges. Even though not part of the official EU-Africa partnership, both the EPAs and the Post-Cotonou negotiations had and will continue to have a profound impact on the relationship between the continents. The EPAs have taken a big step forward in 2016 with the signing of the SADC-EPA and the signing of most member states of the EPAs with the EAC and ECOWAS. However, the EPA with the EAC and the ECOWAS are still pending as some member states are refusing to sign because of fear for detrimental effects on their nascent industries. Another reason is the Brexit vote which means that the biggest trading partner for some African countries will no longer be part of the EPAs. Meanwhile, in order to keep a preferential access to the EU market, non-LDC's within the EAC and ECOWAS have either ratified interim-EPAs or signed them. Hence, there is a real risk for the REC's to become fragmented which would in turn jeopardizing regional integration processes. Another challenge closely linked to the EPAs are the negotiations on the future of the Cotonou agreement which is the overall framework guiding the economic relationship between the two continents – including the EPAs. So far, the negotiations between the ACP-states and the EU have not been very fruitful if not lackluster. Too much is at stake for the parties involved. Further, it seems the main reason for the lengthy negotiations is the fact that the Cotonou agreement has never been anything else but a channel for aid money and has never matured to serve its real purpose: to be a platform for reflection on how to further develop and deepen the cooperation between the stakeholders. Both developments, the EPAs and the Post-Cotonou negotiations, could have severe implications for the future of the EU-Africa relations and need careful thinking of how to forge a way forward and find a sustainable and mutually beneficial way of economic cooperation.

### **Guiding Questions:**

1. How can the EPAs be handled without jeopardizing regional integration processes?  
What could be possible alternatives to the EPAs?
2. What needs to be done to start a fresh dialog on the future economic cooperation between Africa and Europe?

10.30 – 11.00     Tea/Coffee break

11.00 – 12.30     Session V: Youth – perspectives of the next generation

Chair:                • Ms. Achieng Maureen Akena, Executive Director, CCPAU

Input:                • Mr. Kokou Sename Djagadou, Human Resources, Science and Technology, AU Commis-sion  
                          • Mr. Brian Kagoro, Consultant  
                          • Mr. Job Shipululo Amupanda, Commissioner, African Youth Commission  
                          • Ms. Aya Chebbi, Chair, Afrika Youth Movement

### **Background:**

Africa is predominantly a young continent and its youth are active in driving change in a number of countries through social movements. Youth in both Europe and Africa are also the most vulnerable to the vagaries of irregular migration, underdevelopment, unemployment, radicalisation, conflict and organised crime. No discussion around mutual developmental priorities can happen without consideration of young people's needs. It is in recognition of this that the AU focused 2017 on Harnessing Demographic Dividend through investments in the Youth. In addition, the focus areas of the partnership are ones which impact heavily on young people, whether the migration regime or EPAs or other developmental agreements. Both partners from Africa and Europe recognise the importance of enhancing opportunities for young people and promoting their participation in society and decision-making processes. This session will review the impact of EU-Africa relations on youth, and their opportunities and participation.

### **Guiding Questions:**

1. How can the potential of young people be harnessed positively and in a way that allows them agency?
2. How does the Migration regime, the EPAs, and other agreements between Africa and the EU impact on the lives of young people?
3. How do young people continue to have access to opportunities in the current environment of restrictive policies due to radicalisation, irregular migration and organised crime?

12.45 – 13.00     Closure

## **ABOUT THE AFRICA–EU POLICY DIALOGUE PLATFORM**

In 2016 the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and CCPAU joined forces and established a policy dialogue platform to discuss pertinent issues within the Africa–EU partnership. To date, the partnership mainly exists between the AU and EU Commissions. For the partnership to be successful and sustainable in the long run, however, it needs to factor in the interests of European and African member states, as well as the Regional Economic Communities (REC). Furthermore, it is necessary to promote a people-centred approach. If citizens are to accept decisions made by their leaders – African or European – the partnership needs the involvement of non-state actors, such as researchers, civil society and the private sector.

The platform meetings co-organised by the FES and CCPAU are intended to promote open and frank exchanges between both continents and will take place in a closed informal setting held under the Chatham House Rule. Given the complexity of Africa–EU relations and the topics associated with them, these seminars aim at building common ground, coming up with policy recommendations and strengthening networks that can be used to facilitate further cooperation.

## **ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS**

### **CCPAU**

CCPAU has established itself as a critical Pan-Africanist initiative that facilitates a deeper engagement on the part of African civil society organisations and citizens with regional and continental policies and programmes. CCPAU's mandate extends to ensuring that the continent has its people at its centre and not governments, and that decision-making is driven by, and accountable and accessible to African citizens. CCPAU is a network of national, regional and continental African civil society organisations and citizens. We utilize invited and claimed spaces to foster substantive and procedural changes within regional and continental mechanisms, and to amplify African citizens' voices. CCPAU participates in a wide range of activities and programmes, including organising the signature Citizens' Continental Conferences, research and production of policy briefs on pertinent continental issues such as freedom of movement in Africa. CCPAU also carries out advocacy, training, campaigns and mobilisation and cross-continental exchanges.

### **Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung**

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is a private, non-profit organization committed to the values of social democracy. It is the aim of FES to facilitate the political and social education of individuals from all walks of life in the spirit of democracy and pluralism as well as to contribute to international understanding and cooperation. FES carries out its mission in Germany and internationally through its programs of political education, international cooperation, study and research. At present, FES maintains around 100 offices worldwide, of which 19 are in sub-Saharan Africa.

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The Africa-EU relations in the run-up to the 2017 Summit”

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